



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/750,479

12/31/2003

Denise J. Nelson

17,858.1

9846

23556 7590 03/23/2007  
KIMBERLY-CLARK WORLDWIDE, INC.  
401 NORTH LAKE STREET  
NEENAH, WI 54956

EXAMINER

STEPHENS, JACQUELINE F

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3761

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
--	-----------	---------------

3 MONTHS

03/23/2007

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/750,479	<b>Applicant(s)</b> NELSON ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Jacqueline F. Stephens	<b>Art Unit</b> 3761	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 February 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/2/07</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 2/23/07 has been entered.

### ***Response to Arguments***

2. Applicant's arguments filed 2/23/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues there is no motivation or suggestion in Kuske for one of skill in the art to modify the Kuske disclosure to achieve the claimed invention. The present invention teaches a disposable absorbent article in a folded configuration where the ratio in the folded configuration to the unfolded configuration is no more than 0.14. Applicant argues the teaching of compressing the stack of absorbent describes completely different ways of reducing at least one dimension of the absorbent article and Kuske does not teach experimenting with the folding of an absorbent article, only compressing the article thickness. However, the examiner maintains that both Kuske and the claimed invention are concerned with reducing the dimensions of the absorbent article. How the size is reduced does not patentably distinguish the structure from the

Art Unit: 3761

prior art structure. It is not novel to reduce the article by a lesser degree than what is claimed, since the general condition of reducing the size of the article is taught in the prior art.

Applicant argues, has amended claims 13 and 18 to recite "wherein the interior space is sized to enclose no more disposable absorbent articles than the single disposable absorbent article. This added limitation is directed to a change in size of the interior space of the package. A change in size is within the level of one having ordinary skill in the art.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the entire piece of material being more rigid than the other piece of material) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

Art Unit: 3761

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

5. Claim 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable Kuske et al. USPN 6318555.

As to claims 1, 4, 8, 10-17, 20, 24, and 26-28, Kuske discloses a package 50 enclosing multiple articles. Claim 13 recites "wherein the interior space is sized to enclose no more disposable absorbent articles than the single disposable absorbent article". This added limitation is directed to a change in size of the interior space of the package. A change in size is within the level of one having ordinary skill in the art.

Kuske does not disclose the claimed ratios of folded to an unfolded configuration. However, Kuske does disclose the general condition of compressing the absorbent articles in the folded configuration (col. 4, lines 1-15). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to

Art Unit: 3761

provide the absorbent articles with the claimed ratio of the present invention, since where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation, *In re Aller et al.* 105 USPQ 233.

The package has a sheet of material 52 having a viewing region 88. The single disposable article 10 is folded and has a graphic 38, which is visible through the viewing region 88. Kuske teaches only one interior space and that this interior space is large enough for a single disposable article. The claim language does not exclude other articles, it limits the interior space to one interior space.


As to claims 2, 3, 5-7, 9, 18, 19, 21-23, and 25, Kuske does not specifically disclose the rigidity of the walls of the package. However, Kuske does describe a weakened area 74 to permit access to the absorbent articles. One having ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to have some less rigid areas to facilitate opening of the package. Additionally, it would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art have some regions more rigid. Doing so would provide a bag that is not completely collapsible and has the ability to maintain the structure of the absorbent articles.

Art Unit: 3761

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jacqueline F. Stephens whose telephone number is (571) 272-4937. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

  
Jacqueline F Stephens  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3761

March 19, 2007